The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 33, No. 12, December 2001

Carolina country

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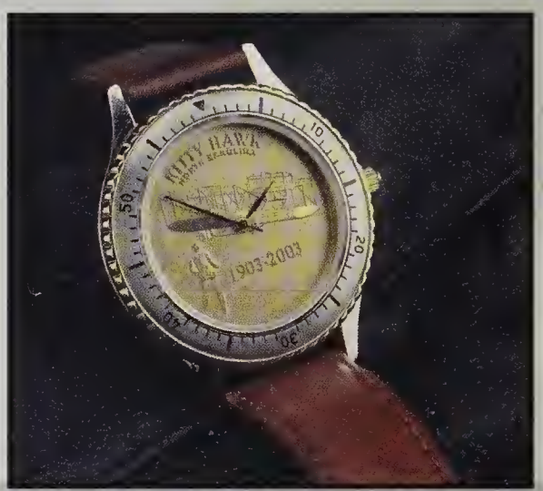
All in the family — Page 6

KITTY HAWK
COMMEMORATIVES

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Man's First Flight.

Enlarged to show detail.



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Has your address changed?

Carolina Country magazine is available monthly to members of North Carolina's electric cooperatives. If you are a member of one of these cooperatives but do not receive Carolina Country, you may request a subscription by calling Member Services at the office of your cooperative. If your address has changed, please inform your cooperative.

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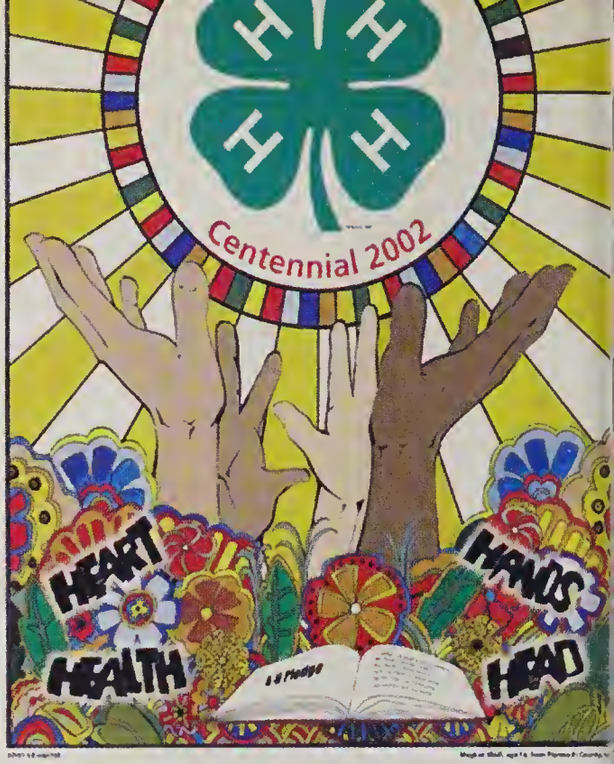
On the Cover

Rachel and her son, Saul, are part of the Piedmont EMC family. Rachel's story is on page 16. (Photo by Todd Gaul. Todd@photofile.com)

Celebrating A Century of Service!



4-H TODAY

- 6.8 million youth in 4-H
- 610,595 volunteers invest time, talent and trust in youth
- 30% of 4-H youth represent minority racial, cultural and ethnic populations

To celebrate 100 years of service, 4-H is leading conversations involving 100,000 youth and adults from all 3,067 counties in the United States

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Celebrating the Centennial of the 4-H Youth Development Movement

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Signature

_____
County *State* *Date*

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_____ Improving the community
_____ Working with literacy prog.
_____ Fighting hunger
_____ Helping a younger person
_____ Improving the environment
_____ Helping someone with special needs
_____ Mentoring/tutoring
_____ Building respect and tolerance for others
_____ Other: _____

Total number of hours: _____

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Parent/guardian Name

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Todd Gaul photo

The Carolina Country family extends our best wishes to your family this holiday season.

We are (from left) editor Michael Gery, advertising manager Jennifer Boedart Hoey, assistant editor/Web manager Tara Verna, business coordinator Jenny Lloyd, associate editor Renee Gannon, art director Nicole Ferrari.

Thanks from Atlantic Beach

My husband and I really enjoy the Carolina Country magazine we get each month. He is retired from Carolina Power & Light, and that is who we get our power at home from, but we are glad to be a member of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative. I look forward each month to this fine informative magazine.

This month was especially good with Gov. Easley. I look forward to the Carolina Compass to see if there are any events I'd like to attend.

Charles & Gloria Baker
Atlantic Beach

"Oh boy!"

I have always loved to sing, and a few years ago I was asked to sing at my church at Christmas. A little boy named Brian was visiting there that day, and when I got up to sing, he said, "Oh boy!"

As we grow older, we'd rather sit back and let the younger people sing. But when I heard the little boy say that, I was made to realize that we are never too old to be a blessing to someone.

When I went back to my seat, my heart was happy and light. That little boy had just heard his grandmother sing, "O, Holy Night."

Nell Warlick
Lincolnton

We're part of the same family

by Michael E.C. Gery

Just when we began to think that you may be growing bored with the stories and pictures readers send in for our monthly series, "Nothing Could Be Finer," we received more submissions than we have for any month since the series began in 1998. More than 300 of you told us about "the finest person in my life," and all of them came straight from the heart (see page 14).

Many of you send notes along with your stories telling us that you appreciate Carolina Country. (That may be one reason why we continue this series.) With her story for this month, Renee C. Tench of Stanley wrote, "Thanks for putting this magazine together for us. It really helps us all feel like we are part of the same family."

Well, Mrs. Tench, you spoke volumes in those two lines.

The main reason we have published this magazine for 53 years is to instill in us the idea that we are one big family.

Cooperatives, after all, are in business solely to provide services that their members generally can't get elsewhere for the prices they pay. They function strictly for the common good. A basic principle of cooperative business is that they help one another. And their work extends to helping the families of their members. Look at what your cooperative may be doing to brighten the lives of your neighbors and communities this holiday season. Look at what you do when you "round up" your monthly payment to the next dollar in order to fund programs for neighbors in need. Look at what cooperatives have done in the past 20 years for the North Carolina Burn Center (see page 12).

In October, electric cooperative linemen met at the N.C. State Fair for the biennial Poletop Rescue Competition (see page 11). While they competed hard against each other, these guys feel part of a fraternity, even though they each work for a different cooperative. David Burr, a lineman with Pee Dee Electric, told me recently, "We are like brothers. When one of us hurts, we all hurt. And I know where to go when I need someone who knows farming, or welding or whatever." And we've seen countless times when a storm hits somewhere in the state how these linemen pour in from other areas to help their brothers, and they stay there until the systems are fully restored.

This family treatment also exists among the communications people, who cooperatives consider a very important part of their business. We continually stay in touch with one another, sharing what we know and do. I recently attended a national conference of editors and advertising managers of statewide electric cooperative publications. It's an annual event where we discuss how things are going and learn new ways to publish these magazines. The conference's main teacher, a publishing expert, said that regardless of what we face in this business, the overwhelming advantage we have is our association among one another, our recognition that we can help rather than compete.

You don't get that inclusiveness just anywhere in the business world. I'm sure that employees for the big utilities or the big media conglomerates feel close to one another from time to time, at holiday parties perhaps. But I'm also sure that they don't feel that close to you, too. As cooperatives, we're all in this together.

Corrections

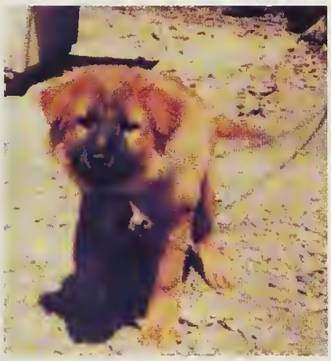
I suppose you have been notified that some errors are printed in two articles on pages 20 and 21 of the November 2001 issue ["The Best Thing That Ever Happened to North Carolina"]. In Carolyn Pittard's "Tobacco": The settlers did not bring tobacco seeds to the "new country;" the Indians already had tobacco. And in Edgar Dancy's "The Wright Brothers flight": The flight took place Dec.17, not Dec.14.

I enjoy reading Carolina County.

Bob Comer
Statesville

Editor's Note: This slipped by us. Sorry. We know better.

When Little One was lost



Little One looked a little tired the day he came home.

I like exploring outdoors and working somewhat. I have a mini chow pup about four months old who I call Little One. He and I went to Uwharrie National Forest in Montgomery County on September 29 and 30 of 2001 to help the forestry service do work on trails, such as Falls Dam trail, running fencing and cleanup. Everything was going well, and we're having a good time, until Sunday morning around 11. I let my dog out to use the "bathroom."

Meanwhile, we were loading up getting ready to move when two people in a jeep beside of me started their jeep and spooked my dog. He ran off in the woods. I started looking and calling for him, but he would not come to me. So I called my girlfriend and told her to come look with me. We stayed 'til late evening looking for my dog, but no luck. We went home.

Monday, a little after dinner, I went back to the trail to look. I met two men deer hunting. Their names were Robert O. Moore and Glenn Anderson of Crooked Creek Volunteer Fire Department in Old Fort, N.C. They said the dog was hung in the trees when they drove up. One started to let him go but he got loose and run off through the woods. We walked and looked and hollered and also whistled, but no chow pup. No Little One. No luck. I went home after about four hours or so.

I went back Tuesday evening to the trail for three or four hours walking and driving and looking for my pup. I talked to my new friends, and they said they seen and heard and called him. But I had no luck, so I went home.

Wednesday I went back to the trail. I took some dog food with me, and also my other dog, Red Shadow, who is also a mini chow. I talked to my friends again. No luck. Red Shadow and I started to look again. We walked and called for about a mile and a half. No luck. I started back the other way and started to drop dog food hoping to catch my dog. We got back to near my friend's camp where the dog had been seen and heard before.

My friends and I thought of tying Shadow to a tree, hoping to lure out Little One. It was getting dark now. Quickly I walked down the trail one way. Shadow would not bark or nothing, so I went back to him. I gave him half of a dog bone. I walked away over the hill. Then Shadow started to bark and whine. I heard a small dog's ruckus barking and whining. I knew my boy Little One was around. He came running for me dragging his three-foot chain behind him. He jumped at me whining and licking. He was happy to see me as I was him.

So I hooked my boys up, said bye to my new friends, and went home dogs and all. This is true story of a man and his dogs.

Danny Brown
Southmont

Curbing false reports on the Internet

I would like to comment on Reid Goldsborough's article "Can You Trust What You See on the Internet?" ["Online," November 2001].

I believe we must all take personal responsibility to stop the distribution of Internet trash and abuse of information. When I receive an email warning me of some dire threat to health and safety, or a chain letter claiming prizes and riches, I go to www.snopes.com and check out their research of the story. Then I email the Snopes page to the "friend" who sent me the bogus information. I kindly explain my philosophy to use this wonderful technology for the greater good and that I refuse to spread false or erroneous stories that breed fear. Thankfully, I hardly receive any crazy emails anymore.

In two years of checking out suspicious stories, I have only found one to be true, and the threat it posed was exaggerated beyond belief.

Keep up the good work of informing members about important issues in our lives.

Betsy Baste
Otto
Haywood EMC

In Warren County

After Sept. 11, my husband and I were driving through a rural area of Warren County and came upon this abandoned country store (circa 1800s). We were touched by the beauty and patriotism.

Judy and Karl Bauman
Lake Gaston
Halifax Electric

Bill and Beebie Tarlton: Always helping victims

Today is October 11, 2001, one month after the terrorism attack on the United States. On September 16, 1999, a disaster of a different type came to eastern North Carolina in the form of a flood caused by Hurricane Floyd.

Billy Tarlton and his wife, Beedie, were volunteers in disaster relief and recovery through the North Carolina Baptist Builders (a ministry of North Carolina Baptist Men) prior to this flood. They were building contractors in their home county; and when there came a need to build a home for disaster relief, their personal contract was put on hold.

They were among the first to respond to the Floyd victims. Billy and Beedie were chosen to lead the North Carolina Baptist effort to reestablish several hundred homes. So they left their home and moved to Grifton, N.C. Through their leadership and coordination of the many thousands of volunteers, they have restored or replaced over 400 homes.

After the terrorist attack on the U.S., Beedie went to New York to help to coordinate the N.C. Baptist Relief effort of feeding teams, providing mobile showers, washer and dryer units and spiritual support for the volunteer workers.

Submitted by John Bentley on behalf of thousands of friends
Laurel Springs
Blue Ridge Electrc

Tuckered out

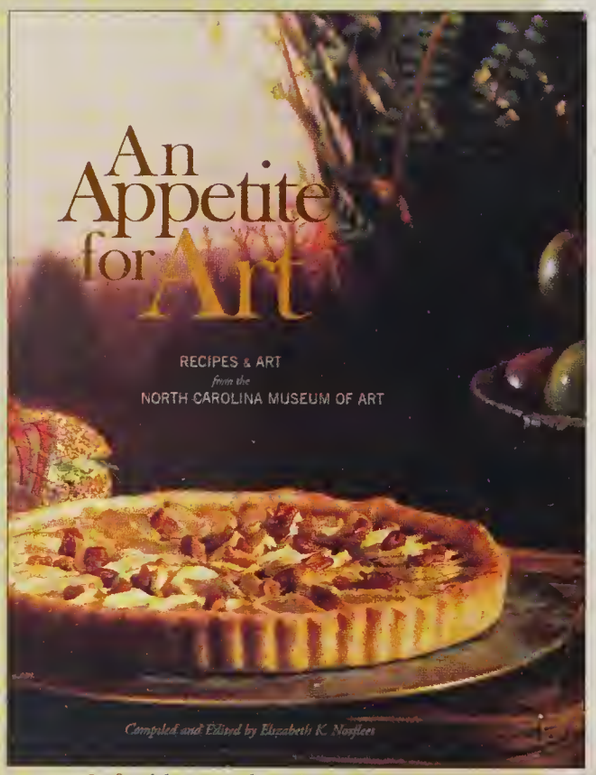
Gretchen Waldorf was four months old when she got tuckered out during Christmas 2000 at her grandparents' place. She is the daughter of Bob and Jennifer Waldorf. Her grandparents, Jimmie and Patsy Gillespie of Ennice, are members of Blue Ridge Electric.

Christmas is for sharing

This is my son Steven and our yellow lab Dixie. They say a dog is a man's best friend, but here it looks like the man is the dog's best friend. They were sharing a Christmas sucker that Dixie ended up with in the end.

Sonja Walls
Kings Mountain

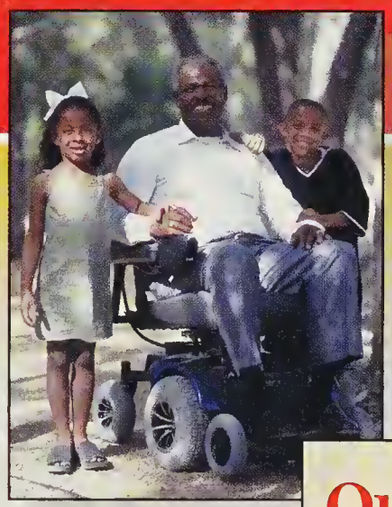
There's no more Taste-Full magazine, but how about this cookbook?



After 10 years, there's no more Taste Full magazine, but how about this cookbook celebrating art and food? Carolina Country published by mistake the availability of subscriptions to Taste Full magazine ("The Carolina Country Collection," November, 2001). We regret the confusion this caused readers and publisher Elizabeth Norfleet, who a year ago decided to adapt her publishing business from magazines to cookbooks in a desire to spend more time with her family.

Taste Full Publications in Oxford has produced a new cookbook in conjunction with the North Carolina Museum of Art. "An Appetite for Art, Recipes and Art from the North Carolina Museum of Art," compiled and edited by Elizabeth K. Norfleet, contains over 300 recipes and 87 museum reproductions as well as food photographs. It is available in hardcover for $39.95 at the museum and bookstores. For more information, call Taste Full Publications at (888) 499-6283.

Get Them Back Where They Belong!



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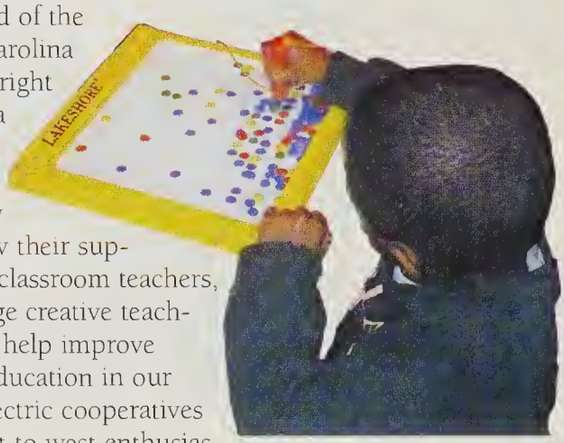
Electric cooperatives give $400,000 in "Bright Ideas" grants to teachers

North Carolina's 27 electric cooperatives and their state association, the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, have awarded almost $400,000 in Bright Ideas grants this year to the state's classroom teachers. Bright Ideas encourages creative classroom teaching by funding special projects of up to $2,000 for teachers in grades K-12.

"The members of North Carolina's 27 electric cooperatives believe strongly in public education," said Randy Brecheisen, President and CEO, Piedmont EMC in Hillsborough and chairman of the board of the North Carolina EMC. "Bright Ideas is a very tangible way they can show their support for classroom teachers, encourage creative teaching, and help improve public education in our state. Electric cooperatives from east to west enthusiastically support classroom teachers with their funds and their energy."



A Bright Ideas project at Elizabeth Elementary in Shelby, given by Rutherford EMC.

Volunteer judges, including educators, community leaders and representatives of the cooperatives, screen proposals from teachers and make selections. Each year, several thousand proposals are submitted statewide. This year, several hundred public school teachers will receive grants, and 70,000 students will benefit from enhanced education experiences made by the electric cooperatives.

Grants are made for such diverse classrooms projects as using grocery purchases to teach challenged children about money and nutrition; intercultural projects that use gardens and ethnic cuisine to teach appreciation for diversity; photography that helps students comprehend difficult math principles; activities that create intergenerational relationships and learning opportunities; and a cooperative printing operation to teach business skills.

North Carolina's 27 electric cooperatives serve 2.4 million people in 93 of the state's 100 counties. They maintain nearly half of the state's electric power lines. The 27 local cooperatives comprise the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, which is headquartered in Raleigh.

"Leave electric co-ops alone and I'll put you back on the Good Boy list."

"Carolina Calling" needs talent

North Carolina's Touchstone Energy electric cooperatives and Smith Productions of Charlotte are seeking talent for a 13-episode TV series that will run statewide next spring on UNC-TV. The "Carolina Calling" series will be a variety show that will spotlight native North Carolina music and talent.

"Carolina Calling" is interested in discovering new talent and will host two more regional Touchstone Energy Carolina Calling Talent Searches. So far they have been held in Wingate, Hickory and Chapel Hill. The remaining talent searches will be held as follows. The shows begin at 7 p.m. and are free of charge.

Dec. 6	West Carteret High School, Morehead City
Jan. 10	Bob Martin Agricultural Center, Williamston

All North Carolina residents are eligible. Entry blanks are available at all electric cooperative offices statewide and can be downloaded from the Carolina Country Web site at www.carolinacountry.com. All entries and an audio or videotape must be mailed to Smith Productions, P. O. Box 472341, Charlotte, NC 28247. For additional information, call Clay Smith (704) 366-9384.

What is a cooperative?

Part 2

Cooperatives worldwide function within the same principles. They are businesses that operate for the benefit of their members, instead of for financial profit. They abide by a common set of values and by seven principles. Each month through July, Carolina Country will describe the principles.

This month we describe the common set of values.

Cooperatives agree to a set of values, which are self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

French Broad EMC lineman is the best at running a poletop rescue

French Broad EMC's Alan Grooms won his second North Carolina electric cooperatives Poletop Rescue Championship Oct. 18 with a winning time of 1:42:69 at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds. The win was the fifth consecutive for a French Broad lineman in the contest that is held every two years.

To reach the Raleigh competition, Grooms won the poletop rescue championship among other French Broad EMC contenders in Marshall earlier in the year, when he defeated defending state champion Toby Griffin. Grooms was the state champion in 1993 as well. As first-place winner this year, he took home a $1,000 check, which he said he will donate to his church.

Second place went to Tri-County EMC's all-time champion Leonard Person, who came in at 1:43.27. Person actually finished in less than 1:35, but his chance for the title evaporated when he was penalized for rushing his performing of CPR for the required five seconds as the procedure's last step.

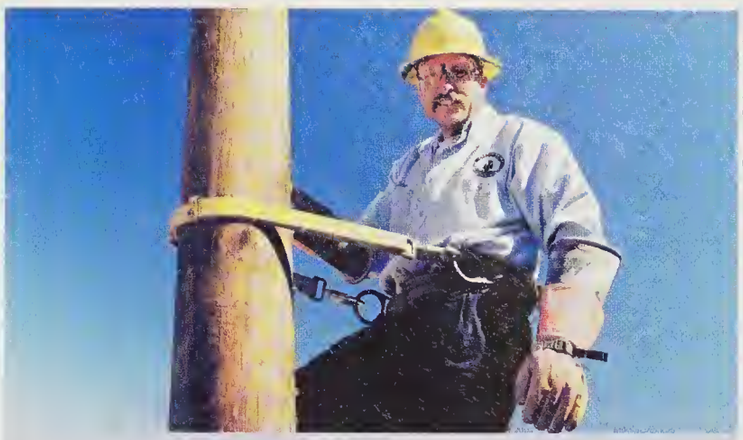
"You can bet I'm going to practice that for next time," Person said. Person took home $500 for second place.

N.C. Labor Commissioner Cherie Berry (who is also a member of Rutherford EMC) waves from the bucket truck at the poletop rescue competition held at the N.C. State Fair. With her are Bobby Love (left) and Tommy Greer, of the electric cooperatives' statewide Job Training & Safety Department, who judged the event.

Fredrick White of Four County EMC, Burgaw, came in third with a time 1:44.63. He won $400. Mike Johnson of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, Tarboro, was fourth at 1:54.28. He won $300. Fifth place went to Reno Coleman of Brunswick EMC, Supply, who finished at 1:59.38 and took home $200.

Poletop rescue is an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirement. The North Carolina electric cooperatives set the standard that each lineman receives annual training and must perform the drill in less than five minutes. The drill consists of a lineman making a mayday call, donning climbing gear and tools, climbing 20 feet up a pole, safely lowering a 120-pound dummy and initiating lifesaving procedures. It is organized and judged by members of the co-ops' statewide Job Training and Safety program, directed by Tommy C. Greer.

The championship featured 24 finalists who all won local competitions. To highlight and educate people on the vital duties cooperative electric linemen perform, the championship was moved to the North Carolina State Fair. North Carolina Agriculture Commissioner Meg Scott Phipps welcomed the linemen and their families, and later, Labor Commissioner Cherie Berry came by to thank the linemen and the cooperatives for their daily contribution to the state. The cooperatives' apprenticeship training program is approved by the state Department of Labor.



Duane Salstrand photos

French Broad EMC lineman Alan Grooms of Mars Hill won first place in the statewide poletop rescue contest.

Randolph EMC's Dave Rowe and WQDR's Mike Wheless teamed to provide a commentary to the crowd that assembled at the fairgrounds. In addition to his duties at Randolph, Rowe is a color commentator for Jefferson-Pilot Sports and former defensive standout for the Super Bowl champion Oakland Raiders.

2001 Poletop Rescue Results in order of competition

Participant	Electric Cooperative	Time
Glenn Parks	Albemarle EMC	2:47.59
Alan Grooms	French Broad EMC	1:42.69
Scott Murray	Rutherford EMC	2:04.31
Leonard Person	Tri-County EMC	1:43.27
Richard Thomas	Randolph EMC	2:29.24
Randy Taylor	Blue Ridge EMC	2:23.43
Charles Bryant	Roanoke EC	2:24.53
Harris Morrison	Central EMC	2:23.13
Mike Johnson	Edgecombe-Martin County	1:54.28
Fredrick White	Four County EMC	1:44.63
Reno Coleman	Brunswick EMC	1:59.38
Dean Stone	Union Power	2:20.09
Brent Talley	Piedmont EMC	2:26.54
Eddie Peoples	Wake EMC	3:02.58
Tim Rouse	Pitt & Greene EMC	2:27.97
Timothy Williams	South River EMC	2:26.45
Greg Blake	Carteret-Craven EC	2:30.44
Paul Greenhill Jr.	EnergyUnited	2:04.22
Roger Smith	Haywood EMC	2:05.16
Frank McIntyre	Pee Dee EMC	2:15.01
Dean Durham	Surry-Yadkin EMC	3:33.86
Carl Greene	Halifax EMC	2:30.79
David Hunt	Lumbee River EMC	2:11.59
Brad Cox	Tideland EMC	2:41.66

The North Carolina Burn Center

Specialized treatment for special victims

by Renee Gannon

When burn victims arrive at the N.C. Jaycee Burn Center, a whole team meets them — doctors, nurses, therapists, counselors, even a nutritionist. They determine what to do to as a team to make patients feel better and get them home again.

One-1,000, two-1,000, three-1,000. In just three seconds an infant can suffer a dangerous burn in water most adults consider just a nice, hot, soothing bath.

The medical team at the North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center hopes to teach people how to avoid this injury to a child, but when it does happen, they are among the best anywhere at healing that child.

Located at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill, the 21-bed facility provides specialized medical care and rehabilitation service to burn victims. The center admits between 400 and 600 patients a year, and works with twice as many outpatients. All burns — scalding, grease, fire, chemical and electrical, and inhalation injuries are treated. Patients have ranged in age from two weeks old to 104. You're transferred here if you're burned on 1 percent of your body, which could be the palm of your hand.

But when you are burned, there is no such thing as a small burn.

Once healed, child patients return to Burn Center reunions.

Two decades of healing

The burn center officially opened on Feb. 23, 1981. The idea began in 1967, when a Goldsboro electrical contractor's employee was severely burned while working on a power line. The company's owner, John Stackhouse, saw that none of the state's major medical centers had the expertise to heal the young man. Stackhouse vowed to do whatever it took to improve burn care in North Carolina.

Stackhouse personally pledged $40,000, and the board of the North Carolina electric cooperative association voted to match it. The state association of volunteer firefighters also pledged $40,000. Then the North Carolina Jaycees stepped in and has raised more than $100,000 for the center and its outreach programs every year since 1974.

North Carolina's electric cooperatives annually give more than $40,000 to the outreach programs, lately through a fundraising golf tournament held each year. This year's event, chaired by Michael Finney, CEO of Halifax EMC in Enfield, raised $45,000.

Buddy G. Creed, CEO of South River EMC in Dunn, is a member of the burn center's board of directors. "In the electric utility industry," he said, "we all understand the potential for severe burns if, God forbid, an employee were to experience electrical contact. The Jaycee Burn Center has gained national recognition for their ability to handle such traumatic injuries. Support of such an organization is a natural fit for all electric utilities, not just the cooperatives."

Some electric cooperative lineworkers have been treated at the burn center, said Creed, but not many. "Because of the stringent safety standards enforced by the electric cooperatives and the level of expertise of our line crews, we have been fortune not to have many such injuries."

Creed himself has a personal understanding of the burn center's mission. On September 7, 1977, his wife was severely burned in an accident. "At the time," he said, "the local burn centers were not able to treat her. We were referred to a doctor at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center in Fayetteville who had quite a bit of experience with the treatment of burn victims. It was that experience that opened my eyes to the need for a comprehensive burn center in North Carolina capable of handling such emergencies. I am also a lifetime Jaycee and helped for years to raise money for the burn center through the Jaycees."

Treatment for life

Burn victims injure the largest organ of the body – the skin — which regulates the body's temperature. People cannot live without it. About 5 to 11 percent of patients die here, but the center's staff does what it can to keep them comfortable the whole time.

"We have a specialized care team," says Kay Teague, the center's division manager. "The staff follows up on patients forever and a day because a burn is so much different from most other injuries. Depending on the severity, the burn will affect the patient for life in some way."

A patient's appearance, physical abilities or emotions may be altered by a burn injury. The physical, occupational and recreational therapists, counselors and chaplain, in addition to the doctors and nurses, all play a part in returning the injured back to day-to-day routine.

"It takes a village to salvage a burn patient," says Dr. Michael Peck, medical director for the burn center. "No one of us has the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to do the whole job alone. Working together, we are a group of otherwise ordinary healthcare professionals who can accomplish extraordinary results."

At admission, the doctors and nurses evaluate and clean the patient's injuries, assess and help manage the pain, and compose a treatment plan. On a daily basis, they attend to fluid replacement, nutrition, pain management and physical and occupational therapy.

Senior Physical Therapist Kristin Kaupang says the whole team sees the patients the first day, which continues all the way through to outpatient care.

A burn patient can be in constant pain, and the staff members, especially the therapists, know their jobs may cause more. "The hardest part is motivating people in pain, and convincing them to work through the pain they are experiencing," says Kaupang.

Pain is handled medically and therapeutically. Michele Barr, recreational therapist, teaches all patients ways of dealing with pain without using drugs, such as with breathing techniques and bio-feedback.

"With the kids, the first thing I try to be is a 'safe' person, to establish a safe contact for the kids, because a lot of the medical interventions are painful. I'm really the first hopefully non-painful treatment," Barr said. "For kids, it will be a lot of play, making sure they have an opportunity to use their natural form of stress and pain relief – playing."

Barr also helps kids understand in an age-appropriate way what they are going through. "We always give them a stuffed monkey when they arrive as a security item, and so they might play doctor on the monkey to help them understand and desensitize the medical equipment and treatment."

Once children are ready to return to school, Barr accompanies them on their first day back to tell fellow students about what their schoolmate has been through.

A multitude of thank-you's

Patients often send cards, family photos and come back to the burn center to say thank you. Every fall, the burn center hosts an adult reunion where former patients and their families have an opportunity to meet with other burn victims.

Since May 1981, the center has held Camp Celebrate – a weekend for children and adolescents who have been burned. It's the one weekend of the year when the children are with their true peers – other burned children who understand. Often, staff members find themselves looking for proof that the children were once patients, as they watch kids run, swim, ride horses, and enjoy other activities.

Kristin Kaupang proudly states that the reunions "are good for the staff as well as the patients, because we see our work come back to us, we see the patients later and know we have done our job."

For more information about the burn center, visit the Web site *http://apollo.med.unc.edu/surgery/burncent/*

How to "learn not to burn"

Ernie Grant admits "the one thing I want to do is work myself out of a job."

For the last 14 years, he has driven many places in the state. Last year alone he drove more than 10,000 miles. He is the Nursing Education Clinician for the N.C. Jaycee Burn Center outreach program. His job is to spread the word on burn safety to preschoolers, elementary schoolchildren, senior citizens and anyone else willing to learn.

In 1987, the outreach program started Learn Not To Burn for the state's fourth graders. Grant makes presentations to classes and also trains teachers how to work the program into the curriculum. In 1994, Learn Not To Burn extended to preschool.

So far, the fourth grade program has been implemented in 96 percent of the state's elementary schools. The preschool program has reached 15 percent.

The newest program, Wrisk Watch, began in 1998, and is aimed at first through eighth graders. This program not only teaches fire and burn safety, it also looks at 16 safety issues that are the most common childhood injuries, such as automobile accidents, bicycle safety, drowning, gun safety, poisoning, and so on.

And for senior citizens, the Remember When program began in 1999. With North Carolina ranking third in the nation for retirees, the center hopes to prevent fire and fall injuries among older adults. The audience discusses what life was like growing up, where they live now, their housing and heating situation, and they in turn learn about uncluttering their homes, installing smoke alarms and fall prevention.

The outreach program is also involved in teaching acute burn care to hospital emergency room staff. "With burns," says Ernie Grant, "the things that people are able to do in the first few moments after the injury makes a big difference with the patient's outcome. By letting the emergency rooms know what the burn center needs to have done, such as the various IV's needed and burn wound treatment, the patient's outcome is better."

The programs are making a difference. Grant says that he knows of 28 people whose lives were saved as a direct result from the Learn Not To Burn campaign.

For more information about these programs, contact the N.C. Jaycee Burn Center at (919) 966-3693.

The Finest Person in My Life

We received more submissions on "the finest person in my life" than on any topic we've introduced since this series began in 1998. It's so heartwarming to see how you feel about the people closest to you. They show how important families are to each of us, and how satisfying it is to tell those we love that we do love them, even if we can't say just why. Many of you were grateful just for the opportunity to tell us how you feel about someone.

During the year-end holidays, we all can turn to the people who mean most to us and give them extra attention and affection. Especially at a time when our own traditions seem under siege somehow, let's spread patience, tolerance and smiles as best we can.

We'll put more of your sentiments on our Web site at www.carolinacountry.com. Look on page 17 for the "Nothing Could Be Finer" themes of 2002.

— The Editors

My Daddy made everything just right

My father, Wayne Widenhouse, always was there for all types of events in my life — the sporting events, school plays and band concerts. He went with me to buy my prom dresses and drum major outfits and even my wedding gown. He was always there to make sure everything was just right, and I had exactly what I needed.

At age 54 he was diagnosed with colon cancer and fought a tremendous battle. Two weeks before he passed away, I crawled up in his lap and thanked him for always being there and for all the special times. Consoling me, he simply said, "I wouldn't have missed it for the world."

Daddy left this world the same way he lived life — with grace, courage and dignity. He never complained and never felt sorry for himself. People have told me that I have his mannerisms and humor. To me, there is no greater compliment.

Tonya Gill
Mt. Pleasant
Union Power

My wife, who made us comfortable

In the autumn of 2000, I found out that I had cancer. I expected that the relationship with my wife was going to be strained because of my illness. Although I felt that my wife was a special person, I quickly found out just how special she really was. She sacrificed time for me, and even made sure I was treated well at the hospital, at home and among friends.

Years before, when my mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, my wife had literally taken care of her in every way imaginable, but I cannot express the sacrifices she made for me. I have to ask, "How many spouses would go through what she went through?" I realized before that she loved me, but I just hadn't realized how much.

Myron Carter
Albertson
Tri-County EMC

My daddy, who sacrificed in the 1970s

This is my daddy, Steve Sheffield. This photo was taken on Thanksgiving Day 1997. Little girls sometimes tend to put their daddies on pedestals. I'm guilty. I remember many wonderful things about life with my daddy. An old, green vinyl swivel rocker (built for a daddy and his two little girls), red-hot cinnamon fireballs, fishing trips, pistachios, phrases like "to make little girls like you ask questions."

One specific memory that comes to mind is a sacrifice that Daddy made for his family. Sometime during the late 70s, I remember Daddy parking his 1970 Ford pick-up. In an effort to save gas money, he started driving his moped to work every day. I hated it when our school bus would inevitably get behind that old moped! Of course my cousin would yell, "Hey Michele, there's your daddy!" The kids on the bus found this funny. I, however, did not. (Not until I became an adult.)

As a stay-at-home mother of three, I've learned all too well about sacrifice. I am thankful that my daddy loved me enough to sacrifice for me. After all, isn't that what love is all about anyway?

Michele Sheffield Barber
West End
Randolph EMC

I can always count on Grandma

My grandma is someone that I really look up to. There will never be a time when an unkind word leaves her mouth or her optimistic lifestyle doesn't shine through. Most people my age don't know what they want to be when they grow up, but I know that I want to be just like my grandma.

Even though she has 12 other grandchildren, my grandma always has the time to talk with me and tell me about her growing up years. We are two generations apart, yet this doesn't stop us from sharing stories of years past. And if my day is kind of rough, I can count on my grandma to smooth over the wrinkles with "turn that frown upside down."

She's really more than a grandmother. She's like a close friend, someone I can share a secret, a giggle or shop with! (We like going to the mall together.) I love my grandma so much, and every moment that I'm with her is a memory I know I'll cherish forever.

Painting nails with Grandma.

Christa N. Pesek, 13
South Mills
Albemarle EMC

My sister, my confidant

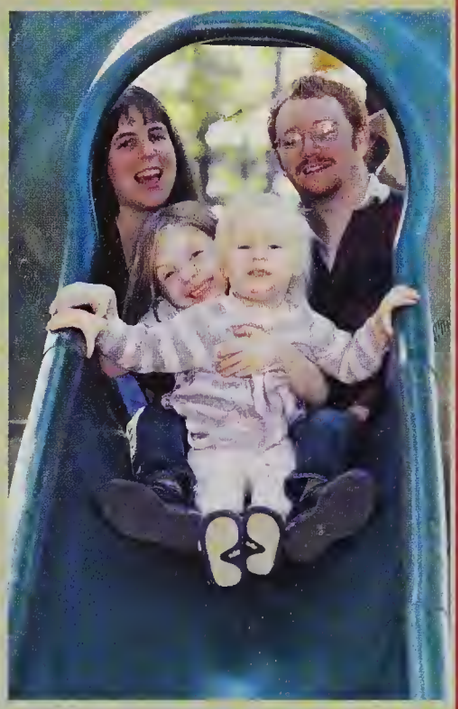
I was the youngest of seven children — five brothers and one sister. My parents were tobacco farmers, and I used to think that maybe they had several children just to make jobs easier on the farm! Whatever the reason, we had a wonderful childhood and lots of love in our home.

By 1992, both my parents and two of my brothers had passed away. My sister assured me that she would be "mother" to me as long as possible. She was not only my sister, but also my very best friend, my counselor, my financier, my traveling companion and my confidant — along with filling the responsibilities of "mother." I loved her dearly and looked forward to her visits more than I could ever explain.

She became suddenly ill in December of last year, and passed away in January 2001. I cannot express the void in my life without her.

Ruth Watson
Mount Airy
Surry-Yadkin EMC

Saul and his powers



The finest person in my life is only 6. Creative and vulnerable, he loves deeply, gives generously and is inspiringly sensitive. Though I, his mother, am charged with bringing him a happy childhood, Saul himself spreads happiness wherever he goes.

I disqualify my daughter, a baby, though she, too, would doubtless cast her vote for Saul. He alone possesses the ability to melt her tears into laughter using his coveted "big brother powers." Once, after giving her a prized possession to play with, he stood beaming at her happy face.

"Saul," I said. "That was amazingly kind and generous."

His reply: "I don't think you have any idea how much I love that girl."

But if he is often giving, he is also filled with gratitude. "Having Sadie is like being rich," he said one sleepy night. "We don't need anything else. Except a Daddy and a Mommy."

On my challenging days, Saul lifts me up like a spring breeze lifts a leaf off the ground, not knowing the power of his simple words. "Mommy, you're a hero."

And then I remember. This is what it's all about.

In a time when cynicism is rampant, negativity is commonplace, and stress the norm, Saul bursts with sincerity and love. Sure, he's only 6, not yet burdened with the stresses of adulthood. But the far-reaching effects of his kind words and deeds are not diminished. The value of spreading joy persists.

"No, Saul," I say, pulling him close, grateful to have this child in my life. "You are a hero."

Saul lives in Hillsborough with his sister, mother and father, where they are members of Piedmont EMC

Donald Rodney Grant, my son

He was born severely mentally and physically handicapped. He taught me love, patience and understanding of handicapped people. But most important, he made me realize if I wanted to see him whole, I would need to accept Jesus Christ as my Savior.

I can't begin to express the love I felt for my son, Donald Rodney Grant. I thank God who trusted me with such a special person. He inspired love in a lot of people. Even though he could not speak, he could reach his many, many friends.

I learned patience because he had to learn to eat, and he didn't sleep well. I put food in his mouth over and over. I held him in my arms for hours every day and night because he felt comfortable there.

He attended Iredell Developmental Day Center, and there I began to understand handicapped people and their needs. Parents of special children want the best for them, too. I tried to do what I could to make this come true.

God took him home July 2, 1997.

Phyllis Grant
Statesville
EnergyUnited

Ruth, my "second mom"

When I was 17 years old, I moved out of my parents' house and in with my grandmother (on my dad's side). We didn't always get along so I tried to stay gone a lot. There was always one place I could go.

My best friend was fortunately my grandma's neighbor. No matter what, I could go over there to get away or just visit. It was like my second home. Her family and I became very close. I loved them like my own family. I even called them my mom and dad.

They were always there for me when I needed them, especially Ruth, my second mom. She treated me like a daughter-daughter, too. She made sure I went to church, got enough to eat (sometimes too much of her good home cooking), and she took care of me when I was sick. I also got some discipline. I can't forget that.

She helped me get along with my Mamaw and with others. Even now, after I'm married and moved to the next county, I can call her and ask for her advice. I am thankful to have had her in my life.

Misty Jantes
Statesville
EnergyUnited

Mama Ruth, my mother-in-law

When I was a young bride, my mother-in-law taught me how to cook and sew, and many other things to numerous to mention. When my cakes didn't turn out right and I would be so flustered I almost cried, she would gently pat me on the shoulder and say, "That's all right honey, you'll do better next time." And when my sewing looked more like a sack to take to the cotton field than a dress, she would patiently rip the seams out and teach me step-by-step until the garment turned out to be a beautiful dress.

"Mama Ruth" didn't know the meaning of the word criticize. She and her son are both gone now, and I'm almost 80. I hope to leave the same legacy to others that she left me, the gift of gentleness, kindness, patience and never to criticize.

Edith M. Walker
Mocksville
EnergyUnited

My husband, J.D., honest and faithful

I met J.D. Hatley in the small town of Stanfield, N.C., on a Sunday afternoon. We were out with friends. We made a date for that night and dated for 1 ½ years. We were married May 7, 1949, by Rev. Brooks Jerome.

J.D. was a very quiet person, didn't talk much, didn't look for faults in others. Never complained about food or clothing. Slow to anger and didn't hold grudges. Someone said he was a gentleman; he was also a gentle man.

He served his country for two years. He worked for Cannon Mills 43 years, starting as sweeper, then oiler, fixer and finally supervisor.

J.D.'s wants were few. If he needed something he bought it. He could fix almost everything. He lived by the old saying, "If it isn't broken, don't fix it."

He loved his family, church and mission where he lived all his life, except the time in military service. He loved the outdoors, building pasture fences for his cattle, gardening and riding his John Deere tractor. He loved his pastor Dr. Ronny Russell, his Sunday School class teacher Tony Benoy.

His main goal in life was to be honest, take care of his family and help others.

He was a loving son to his parents, making sure his mother's needs were met for 17 ½ years after his father's death. An excellent father to our three children, and a super grandfather to our two grandchildren and a gem of a husband for 51 ½ years.

He died Nov. 4, 2000, just five days from the 53rd anniversary of our meeting.

He wanted so much to get well, but the cancer was stronger than he was.

I know he's in a better place, but he is missed dearly. Each day when I count my blessings, I thank God for the years I had with him.

Doris W. Hatley
Stanfield
Union Power Cooperative

My Daddy, who shared wonders large and small

The finest people in our lives, I think, are our teachers. My greatest teacher was my Daddy, Bill Land.

Daddy taught me practical things: how to chop an onion easily and use a chain saw safely. With patience and skill he showed me how to tie a flounder rig and fry the catch to perfect golden crispness. Daddy taught me to see and celebrate life around me. He noticed and shared with me small wonders: the first green twists of scuppernong vines, where the bream would return to bed and the marvelous fullness of the moon.

Daddy also taught me how to be successful in life and work. He taught me to offer my hands to others as he always opened his to me. He taught me sit quietly, speak gently and consider my words carefully. By his example I learned respect, integrity and caring. From his teasing I learned laughter, and through his love I learned to love.

He passed away a year ago but his lessons will always be a part of me.

Lynda Clay
Charlotte
Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

Send us your best. Earn $50.

Here are the themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

February 2002
"Best Advice for Young Parents"
Words of wisdom for parents of young children.
Deadline: Dec. 15

March 2002
"Best Garden I Ever Saw."
Send advice and photos if possible.
Deadline: Jan. 15

April 2002
"Best North Carolina Vacation I Ever Had."
Where, why and send pictures.
Deadline: Feb. 15

May 2002
"Why I Like Living in the Country."
Tell us where and what's good about it.
Deadline: March 15

June 2002
"The Funniest Story I Ever Heard"
True or not so true.
Deadline: April 15

July 2002
"How to Survive a Storm."
Your advice and memories about storms.
Deadline: May 15

August 2002
"My Funniest Pet Story."
Send pictures, too.
Deadline: June 15

September 2002
"My Favorite Photo."
Our annual photo gallery.
Deadline: July 15

October 2002
"How I Learned to Drive."
How good was the teacher, really?
Deadline: August 15

November 2002
"The Dumbest Thing I Ever Did."
And the lesson you learned afterwards.
Deadline: Sept. 15

December 2002
"Advice for Getting Older."
How can we age gracefully?
Deadline: Oct. 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
4. E-mail or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay $50 for each submission published.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
9. Send to Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616. Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com. Or through the Web site: www.carolinacountry.com

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NON-TOBACCO RATES

MONTHLY RATES

Issue Age	$50,000 Male	$50,000 Female	$100,000 Male	$100,000 Female	$250,000 Male	$250,000 Female	$500,000 Male	$500,000 Female
20	----	----	9.53	9.10	14.65	13.56	23.18	21.00
21	----	----	9.53	9.10	14.65	13.56	23.18	21.00
22	----	----	9.53	9.10	14.65	13.56	23.18	21.00
23	----	----	9.53	9.10	14.65	13.56	23.18	21.00
24	----	----	9.53	9.10	14.65	13.56	23.18	21.00
25	----	----	9.53	9.10	14.65	13.56	23.18	21.00
26	----	----	9.53	9.18	14.65	13.78	23.18	21.43
27	----	----	9.62	9.18	14.87	13.78	23.62	21.43
28	----	----	9.62	9.18	14.87	13.78	23.62	21.43
29	----	----	9.62	9.18	14.87	13.78	23.62	21.43
30	----	----	9.62	9.18	14.87	13.78	23.62	21.43
31	----	----	9.62	9.18	14.87	13.78	23.62	21.43
32	----	----	9.62	9.18	14.87	13.78	23.62	21.43
33	----	----	9.62	9.18	14.87	13.78	23.62	21.43
34	----	----	9.71	9.18	15.09	13.78	24.06	21.43
35	----	----	9.71	9.27	15.09	14.00	24.06	21.87
36	----	----	9.71	9.36	15.09	14.21	24.06	22.31
37	----	----	9.71	9.45	15.09	14.43	24.06	22.75
38	----	----	9.80	9.53	15.31	14.65	24.50	23.18
39	----	----	9.88	9.71	15.53	15.09	24.93	24.06
40	----	----	10.06	9.80	15.96	15.31	25.81	24.50
41	----	----	10.23	9.97	16.40	15.75	26.68	25.37
42	----	----	10.32	10.15	16.62	16.18	27.12	26.25
43	----	----	10.50	10.32	17.06	16.62	28.00	27.12
44	----	----	10.67	10.50	17.50	17.06	28.87	28.00
45	----	----	11.02	10.67	18.37	17.50	30.62	28.87

Call for more information

MONTHLY RATES

Issue Age	$50,000 Male	$50,000 Female	$100,000 Male	$100,000 Female	$250,000 Male	$250,000 Female	$500,000 Male	$500,000 Female
46	----	----	11.37	10.93	19.25	18.15	32.37	30.18
47	----	----	11.90	11.20	20.56	18.81	35.00	31.50
48	----	----	12.42	11.46	21.87	19.46	37.62	32.81
49	----	----	13.03	11.81	23.40	20.34	40.68	34.56
50	----	----	13.65	12.07	24.93	21.00	43.75	35.87
51	----	----	14.35	12.42	26.68	21.87	47.25	37.62
52	----	----	14.96	12.77	28.21	22.75	50.31	39.37
53	----	----	15.66	13.12	29.96	23.62	53.81	41.12
54	----	----	16.45	13.65	31.93	24.93	57.75	43.75
55	----	----	17.41	14.17	34.34	26.25	62.56	46.37
56	----	----	18.37	14.78	36.75	27.78	67.37	49.43
57	----	----	19.51	15.40	39.59	29.31	73.06	52.50
58	----	----	20.73	16.10	42.65	31.06	79.18	56.00
59	----	----	22.31	16.97	46.59	33.25	87.06	60.37
60	----	----	24.41	18.11	51.84	36.09	97.56	66.06
61	----	----	27.03	19.25	58.40	38.93	110.68	71.75
62	----	----	29.92	20.56	65.62	42.21	125.12	78.31
63	----	----	33.25	22.05	73.93	45.93	141.75	85.75
64	----	----	37.01	23.88	83.34	50.53	160.56	94.93
65	----	----	41.21	26.42	93.84	56.87	181.56	107.62

Call for more information

Additional ages and amounts with guaranteed rates (of course) available upon request.

Other amounts available upon request. Premiums are based on applicant's age at nearest birthday. Policies are non-cancelable as long as premiums are paid on time, however, if the insured commits suicide within two years of the Policy Date (may vary by state), the benefit is return of premium. Premiums may be paid annually, semi-annually or monthly bank draft. (A no-cost medical exam may be required depending on age, health or amount of coverage desired). Premiums $100,000 and above are annual term, super-preferred rates. Policy Form No. PXART99NW1. Level Death Benefit to age 95. Premiums increase annually. All policies are issued and subject to underwriting by Great American Life Insurance Company®, P.O. Box 5416, Cincinnati, OH 45201-5416.

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ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ ❑ MALE ❑ FEMALE

AMT. OF INS. DESIRED _____ ❑ TOBACCO ❑ NON-TOBACCO

HOME PHONE ( ) _____ WORK PHONE ( ) _____

BENEFICIARY _____ AGE _____

The best time to call me is:

❑ Morning ❑ Afternoon ❑ Evening (❑ Home ❑ Work)

I wish to pay my premiums: ❑ Annually ❑ Semi-Annually ❑ Monthly Bank Draft

ADDITIONAL APPLICATION REQUESTED FOR:

NAME _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ ❑ MALE ❑ FEMALE

AMT. OF INS. DESIRED _____ ❑ TOBACCO ❑ NON-TOBACCO

Comments: _____

I am also interested in: ❑ 10 year term ❑ 15 year term ❑ 20 year term

OD2-B051-ART

TRUEST PORTRAITS of the Appalachian region

by Tara Verna

In 1907, an Avery County farmer picked up a camera to make ends meet, and ended up recording a piece of Appalachian history that might otherwise have been lost.

A new book by Ralph E. Lentz II places those pictures in a historical context that challenges some of the stereotypical views of Appalachian life presented in the first half of the 20th century. The book, "W.R. Trivett, Appalachian Pictureman: Photographs of a Bygone Time," was published by McFarland & Company of Ashe County.

Born in Watauga County in 1884, W.R. Trivett taught himself the art and science of photography to supplement his farming income. He ordered his first view camera in 1907 from the Conley Camera Company. After learning as much as he could from mail-order pamphlets, catalogs and brochures, Trivett created a set of business cards and a personalized stamp set for the backs of his photos which read, "From Willie R. Trivett Photo Studio. Whaley: N.C." Later, he even constructed his own "picture house" or darkroom, which closely resembled an outhouse with windows.

Through the 1950s, Trivett's friends and neighbors in the Beech Mountain community of Avery County served as his customers. His clientele tended to live within walking distance, although he had buyers from as far away as Sunset, Washington. Trivett received anywhere from five to 40 cents per print. Of the 460 photographs in his collection, 425 of these glass plate negatives are portraits, revealing his clients' desire to pay for people photos rather than mountainous landscapes and other still lifes.

Trivett's wife Mertie remained one of his favorite subjects to photograph. The two courted for more than five years before becoming betrothed during Christmas 1913. They went on to enjoy more than 50 years of marriage.

While Trivett eked out his farming with photos, well known photographers such as Bayard Wootten and Doris Ulmann took photographs of their own artistic interpretations of Appalachia. Employed by profit-driven publishers, these photographers presented a stereotypical view of the region that Americans were already familiar with: poor, backward, uneducated and isolated. Although similar conditions could be found in these mountainous communities, Trivett's photographs challenge this assumption by revealing these stereotypical shots to be exceptions, rather than rules.

What's more, the majority of Trivett's subjects followed popular culture — driving automobiles, going to movies, following political and social events, and wearing clothing modeled after "big city" styles. A 1920 census reveals that only 8 percent of the Beech Mountain township community was considered illiterate.

Trivett, along with other Appalachian "picturemen," captured the truest portraits of the region. The picturemen worked directly for the mountain people and as such, tried to make their photos "good and plain" to meet their subjects' desires and expectations.

Ralph Lentz's 176-page book, "W.R. Trivett, Appalachian Pictureman: Photographs of a Bygone Time," contains 105 photographs by Trivett. Order a copy through McFarland & Company Inc., Publishers for $35 plus tax and shipping. Call (800) 253-2187 or visit www.mcfarlandpub.com.

▲*(above left) Lowella Guy Ward. Note the war time "U.S." insignia and a "V" pin for victory on the collar of her blouse.*

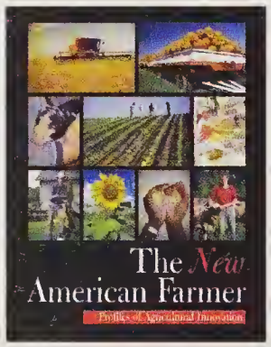
▲*(middle) The Trivett family around 1919: Mertie, W.R. and their son Haskell.*

▲*(above right) Juanita Estep and Ruby Guy Estep.*

Book profiles innovative American farmers

Driven by economics, concerns about the environment or a yearning for a more satisfying lifestyle, farmers and ranchers across the United States have embraced new approaches to agriculture.

Fifty of their stories are captured in a book just published by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program, "The New American Farmer," a collection of in-depth interviews with farmers and ranchers. The book describes diverse operations around the country and details the effects of those systems on farm profitability, quality of life, rural communities and the environment. This "new American farmer" does things differently — with measurable results.



Alex and Betsy Hitt of Peregrine Farm in Graham are two such farmers. Over the past 20 years, the couple has raised and profited from vegetables and blueberries produced on five of their 26 acres by selling to local farmers markets, restaurants and stores. Their profile includes details on starting up, efforts to streamline, profitability, and environmental benefits.

Books cost $10 or PC and Mac CD-ROMs are available for $5. To order, visit www.sare.org and print out an order form. Fax to (802) 656-4656 or mail to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Hills Building, Room 10, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082. Add $3.95 for shipping, plus 95 cents for each additional, up to nine. You can also call (802) 656-0484 or e-mail sanpubs@uvm.edu.

Ghostly canines haunt North Carolina's history

Written by authors who claim to receive visits from their dearly departed Great Dane, stories from "Ghost Dogs of the South" explore the bond between dogs and their human companions — a bond so strong it appears to make no distinction between life and afterlife.

Randy Russell and Janet Barnett of Asheville, combine these stories of Southern folklore with turn-of-the-twentieth-century photos from their private collection of people with their dogs. Read about Mike the Airedale who saves a group of miners from impending doom or a group of ghost dogs who guard a North Carolina mountain where a grisly murder occurred at the end of the Civil War.

"Ghost Dogs of the South" retails for $16.95 at local bookstores.

Forsyth County artist offers calendar of works

Pfafftown resident David E. Doss recently released a calendar of his popular watercolor paintings, just in time for the holidays. The calendars feature 12 different images and sell for $10.99 (or two for $20), plus $5 shipping.

To view more Doss art, visit www.davidedoss.com or call the Southern Home Gallery in Winston-Salem toll-free at (888) 761-8822.

Junior historians get into North Carolina's past

Getting students interested in history can be similar to pulling teeth, but with the help of the Tar Heel Junior Historian Association (THJHA), it's a little less painful.

Sponsored by the N.C. Museum of History, THJHA membership is free and available to North Carolina teachers and students. Membership benefits include free educational materials for teachers and students, teacher supplements, Web-based courses, and the biannual magazine, "Tar Heel Junior Historian." In addition, THJHA members enter history projects in several competitions each year. The museum showcases the winning projects.

Copyright N.C. Museum of History

Any group of students in grades four to 12 with an adult adviser can form a club and join the association. During the 2000-2001 school year, more than 7,900 young people participated via 163 clubs in 65 North Carolina counties.

For more information, contact Rebecca Lewis at (919) 715-0200, ext. 319 or visit www.ncmuseumofhistory.org and click on "Educational Services."

Visit the Carolina Country Store

We've begun stocking the shelves of the new Carolina Country Store. It's our way of showcasing and supporting the growing economy of the North Carolina countryside.

Do you have something to stock on the Carolina Country Store shelves? Send information and pictures to our storekeeper Tara Verna through the Web site or at Carolina.country@ncemcs.com.

The store is open 24 hours a day, every day, at www.carolinacountry.com.

Used car donations save lives

Got an old "clunker" sitting in your driveway taking up space? Or a vehicle that has outlived its usefulness? Clear space in your garage and contribute to a worthwhile cause at the same time through the National Kidney Foundation's Kidney Cars Program. Money raised helps support programs in research, patient services like Kidney Camp, organ donation and public education.

To donate your car, call 1-800-488-CARS and a representative will walk you through the process. The foundation will arrange a free tow and you may be eligible for a tax deduction. Vehicles are sold either at auction or for parts, with more than 80 percent of the proceeds directly supporting the work of the National Kidney Foundation. You can also donate online at www.nkfnc.org.

Qualifying seniors receive free wheelchairs, scooters

The "Seniors in Motion" program of North and South Carolina provides motorized and manual wheelchairs, three- and four-wheel scooters, and other medical items to Senior Citizens (65+) and physically-handicapped individuals. The equipment is usually available at no cost to those who qualify through Medicare.

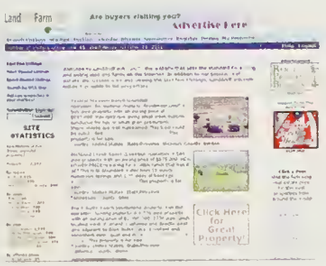
"A lot of people don't know that they are entitled to such equipment through Medicare," said Andy Wedermyer, business and marketing director for the program. "And those that do often don't have the co-insurance to cover the potential 20 percent they may need to pay out-of-pocket. Our program's hardship policy makes up this difference."

In addition to the hardship policy, "Seniors in Motion" offers in-home assessments by trained local rehab specialists to ensure a comfortable fit between people and equipment.

To find out if you qualify, call (800) 594-1225.

Search for land online

LandAndFarm.com contains nearly 2,500 properties for sale throughout the United States. From ranches and mountain acreage to wheat and timber farms, LandAndFarm.com is the largest, independent rural property listing service in the world and a resource for finding or selling real estate. The Web site provides a sign-up for a free weekly newsletter that summarizes news and properties for sale. Visitors can choose from several different ways to list their properties that range from the basic, free listing, to a premium listing for $49.95 per month. Visit LandAndFarm.com for more information.



Dream/Girl magazine and Web site

Since 1997, "Dream/Girl" magazine has bypassed typical teenage fare served up by other female-targeted publications, to provide girls with the most informative and interesting arts and literary information around. From poems and stories submitted by young readers, to book reviews, art projects and interviews, the six issues per year are loaded with thought-provoking subjects — minus the sometimes distracting presence of ads.

Not long after readers delve into their latest issue, Dream/Girl's Web site, www.dgarts.com, showcases the current magazine's features, plus expanded content that didn't make it to print. The magazine targets girls ages 9 –14, but encourages parents to consider getting the magazine for both younger and older girls, depending on their interests and maturity. Local libraries carry the publication and teachers often encourage their students to participate in its writing and art contests.

A Dream/Girl magazine subscription costs $22.95 and can be ordered online or through the mail at Dream/Girl Subscriptions, P.O. Box 97365, Raleigh, NC 27624-7365. Questions? E-mail sales@dgarts.com or call (919) 676-2694.

The Bluegrass Experience: 30 years and still rockin'

"The Bluegrass Experience" recently released their first CD in 25 years. A favorite among bluegrass fans throughout North Carolina, the band got its start with a nine-year stint at Chapel Hill's well known Cat's Cradle music club in the 70s and 80s. Their reputation and fame grew after winning the prestigious World's Championship Bluegrass Band title in 1972 at Union Grove. From there, it was onto a variety of festivals: Newgrass Festival in Camp Springs, Bicentennial Folk Festival, Festival for the Eno in Durham, Bass Mountain Bluegrass Festival and more.

The band has performed several times for Central Electric Membership Corporation and also throughout cooperative service territories, including the region served by Randolph EMC.

Their latest CD "Experience This!" features six original songs by lead guitarist Tom Edwards and seven stalwarts that the five-member group often performs. Other band members include: Thomas "Snuffy" Smith on bass; Keith Thomas on fiddle, guitar, mandolin and vocals; Mike Aldridge on vocals and mandolin; and Stan Brown on banjo.

For more information or to arrange a performance, contact Tom Edwards, P.O. Box 364, Pittsboro, N.C. 27312 or

"INDIVISIBLE"

ART EXHIBITION FEATURES WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA'S

"HandMade in America"

photo by DebbieFleming Caffrey

"I was raised right here in these mountains. You just can't beat it — no way. I don't care where you go. And I've been over a lot of country in my life, but I've never seen nothin' to beat these mountains."
Davitus Gosnell, 90-year-old tobacco farmer, Marshall

by Tara Verna

Fueled by hundreds of inspiring stories from people nationwide and captured by talented photographers and interviewers, the documentary project, "Indivisible: Stories of American Community," took shape. The project highlights the efforts of 12 diverse communities, from Alaska to Florida, including the challenges they face and the people who have stepped up to meet those challenges. In the wake of the Sept. 11 tragedy, now is an ideal time to re-examine the strengths and perseverance of the American community through this remarkable compilation.

One "Indivisible" story of community revitalization takes place in western North Carolina. This 23-county region fell into economic decline after an Interstate highway routed traffic and business away from small towns, replacing country stores with mega malls and unique local businesses with franchises.

These North Carolinians deliberated over various ways to foster economic growth while preserving their mountain heritage, values and culture. So focused upon new ideas, they nearly overlooked the treasure trove of existing craftspeople scattered throughout the Blue Ridge Mountains. In 1994, with the help of a grant, the group created the nonprofit organization, "HandMade in America" and set out to establish western North Carolina as the center of handmade objects in the nation.

HandMade in America Director Becky Anderson discussed the most intriguing facet of the organization's work: "...we ask our communities to covenant with one another. We take the biblical sense of covenant, meaning trust, and we ask them to covenant with each other in sharing their knowledge, sharing their resources...What you really get are not just organizations that are bound to each other, but you get people that are very bound to each other. It becomes very personal and, in the end, that's all that it is, personal."

Today, HandMade in America has achieved a 10-15 percent increase in income for many of their craftspeople and more than $11 million in investments in six of the region's smallest towns.

And that's just one of 12 stories of innovative American communities highlighted in the "Indivisible" exhibition. North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh hosts the primary exhibit through Jan. 6, 2002. In addition, there are other venues and ways to take in this extraordinary collection of community struggles and successes.

Interactive postcard exhibit
- ☆ Raleigh-Durham airport, through Jan. 6, 2002

Photograph exhibits
- ☆ Asheville/Buncombe Tech, Marshall, through Feb. 4, 2002
- ☆ Union County Community Arts Council, Monroe, Feb. 11-March 31, 2002
- ☆ Iredell Arts Council, Statesville, April 1-31, 2002
- ☆ Franklin Square Gallery, Southport, May 4-June 1, 2002

"Community Captions" exhibit featuring photographs by more than 50 people in North Carolina communities
- ☆ North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, Dec. 18, 2001-March 17, 2002

Publication
- ☆ "Local Heroes Changing America" features photographs from the exhibition and interview excerpts. Also contains an audio CD of community voices. Available at the North Carolina Museum of Art, **www.indivisible.org** and at bookstores across the country.

Web site www.indivisible.org
- ☆ Contains background information, image gallery, "Educator's Guide" for use in schools, how-to booklet for developing a community documentary project, and more.

Indivisible is a project of the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University in partnership with the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona.

For more information on "Indivisible," call (919) 839-6262 or visit **www.ncartmuseum.org** or **www.indivisible.org**. To learn more about "HandMade in America," visit **www.wnccrafts.org**, call (828)-252-0121 or e-mail wnccrafts@aol.com.

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A Carolina Christmas

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For more information, contact Landmark Galleries in Mooresville at (704) 664-4122 or (800) 842-8604. You can also e-mail cotton@landmark-galleries.com

December events

MOUNTAINS
(west of I-77)

Ashe County Arts Council
Ongoing events, Jefferson
Through Dec. 31, Trees and Wreaths, Ashe Arts Center
(336) 246-ARTS

Ashe Civic Center
Ongoing events, West Jefferson
Dec. 4, The Four Lads, $15, 7:30 p.m., Christmas music combined with 50s hits
(336) 246-4483

Live at Leatherwoods
Ongoing events, Shelby
Dec. 1, Meridian, $6
Dec. 8, Carolina Road, $10
Dec. 15, The Darin Aldridge Band, $10,
Dec. 29, New Year's Eve Jam, $5
7-11 p.m., (704) 480-7323

Schiele Museum of Natural History
Ongoing events, Gastonia
Dec. 8, stories for children
Dec. 9, Backcountry Farm Christmas celebration, Tyrannosaurus Rex discussion,
(704) 866-6900,
www.schielemuseum.org

Asheville Art Museum
Ongoing events, Asheville
Through Dec. 9, "Pop Art! Selections from Weatherspoon Art Gallery," (828) 253-3227

Old Tyme Christmas
Weekends in Dec., Pilot Mountain, carolers, carriage rides, home tours, Santa
(336) 368-2248

Artisans Show & Sale
Dec. 1-23, Marion
McDowell Arts and Crafts Association, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.,
(828) 652-8610

Christmas Meals at the Depot
Dec. 1, 6-8, Old Fort
Depot, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
(828) 668-7223

Christmas Parade
Dec. 1, Hendersonville
10:30 a.m., (828) 692-4179

Winterfest
Dec. 1, Belmont
(704) 825-8191

Christmas Parade
Dec. 1, Lincolnton
6 p.m., (704) 732-9044

Boat Parade
Dec. 1, Lake Lure
Lighted boats, bonfire, music, fireworks, 6:30 p.m.
(828) 625-2725

Appalachian Potters Market
Dec. 1, Marion
McDowell High School
(828) 652-8610

Christmas Parade
Dec. 1, Kings Mountain
3 p.m., (704) 730-2103

Festival of Trees
Through Dec. 2, Brevard
Silvermont Mansion, 40 trees, cafe, raffle, $3, (828) 877-5572

Choral Society Concert
Dec. 2, West Jefferson
First Baptist Church, 7:30 p.m., $6/$3, (336) 246-ARTS

Christmas Parade
Dec. 2, Mount Airy
3 p.m., (336) 786-6116

Reindeer Romp
Dec. 2, Asheville
Hayood Park Hotel, noon-3:30 p.m., 1-mile fun walk/run & 5K run, $15/$10 benefits American Lung Association of Asheville,
(800) 452-8283

Holiday Sundays with the Guild
Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23, Asheville
Folk Art Center, free musical performances, (828) 298-7928

Live Nativity
Dec. 5-7, Collettsville
Hard and Flossie Clark Family Park, 7-9 p.m., (828) 758-2278

Christmas Parade
Dec. 6, Elkin
4 p.m., (336) 526-1111

Tryon Christmas Stroll
Dec. 7, Tryon
Downtown, 5-9 p.m., open house, caroling, food, carriage rides, entertainment
(828) 859-8300

Handcrafters Show
Dec. 7-8, Brevard
St. Timothy's Church
(828) 882-4983

Visit the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte to view, "William Morris: Myth, Object and the Animal," on exhibit through March 31, 2002.

Tim Frye's Pickin' on the Creek
Dec. 8, Mount Airy
7:30 p.m., $5, 12-and-under free, (336) 786-5039

Christmas Parade
Dec. 8, Old Fort
(828) 668-7223

Holiday Celebration
Dec. 8, Flat Rock
Blue Ridge Community College, 5:30-9 p.m., carriage rides, music, crafts, book fair, Santa, children's activities
(828) 694-1815

Christmas Parade
Dec. 8, Fletcher
10:30 a.m., (828) 687-0751

Christmas on the Farm
Dec. 8, Kings Mountain
Kings Mountain State Park
1:30-3:30 p.m.
(803) 2222-3209

Highlands Christian Choir
Dec. 9, Highlands
Community Bible Church, made up of all church choirs in the Highlands area, 4 p.m. & 7 p.m., (828) 526-2418

Christmas Drive-Thru
Dec. 14-16, Hendersonville
Stony Mountain Baptist Church
Portrayal of Jesus' life, free,
(828) 692-2944

Festival of Carols
Dec. 15, Fletcher
Kate's Park, singing, hot chocolate, 200 luminaries
(828) 687-0751

The Blue Ridge Jamboree
Dec. 15, Mount Airy
Andy Griffith Playhouse, 7:30 p.m., $7 adults, 12-and-under free, (336) 786-7998

Best Christmas Pageant Ever
Dec. 20-30, Blowing Rock
(828) 295-9627

CONTINUED

december events

Kwanzaa
Dec. 26, Asheville
YMI Cultural Center, traditional music, readings & ethnic foods, 3-6 p.m., (828) 252-4614

New Year's Celebration
Dec. 31, Shelby
Council on Aging/Senior Center, 8 p.m.-midnight, dance & breakfast for adults 55 and above, $10, (704) 482-3488

First Night
Dec. 31, Asheville
7 p.m.-midnight, alcohol-free celebration, entertainment, children's activities, fireworks
(828) 259-5800

PIEDMONT
(between I-77 and I-95)

Mint Museum of Art
Ongoing Exhibits, Charlotte
Through April 28, 2002, "Ansel Adams: The Man Who Captured the Earth's Beauty Part II," Through March 31, "William Morris: Myth, Object and the Animal," (704) 337-2000, www.mintmuseum.org

Ackland Art Museum
Ongoing events, Chapel Hill
Through Dec. 30, "Masters of the Medium: European Drawings from the Collection of the Ackland Art Museum," Dec. 20-Feb. 17, "Young America: Treasures from the Smithsonian American Art Museum," (919) 966-5736
www.ackland.org

Granville County Museum
Ongoing events, Oxford
Through April 2002, "Dinostories" a hands-on exhibit, free, (919) 693-9706

Museum of Life and Science
Ongoing events, Durham
Dec. 7-9, 14-16, 21-22, Santa train
Dec. 31, "Parents Night Out," $49-$59
Through Jan., "Biodiversity 101: Saving Life on Earth," Through March 2002, mongoose lemurs exhibit, (919) 220-5429, www.ncmls.org

North Carolina Museum of Art
Ongoing exhibits, Raleigh
Through Jan. 6, "Indivisible: Stories of American Community," Through Feb. 17, "Toulouse-Lautrec: Master of the Moulin Rouge," Through Dec. 3, "World AIDS Day Quilt," Dec. 1, "World's Largest Painting by One Artist," (919) 839-6262
www.ncartmuseum.org

Brock Performing Arts Center
Ongoing events, Mocksville
(336) 751-3000

Regional Museum of History
Through mid-Jan., Oakboro
"Glimpses of Christmas Past," free, (704) 485-3612

Gunsmith Exhibit
Through Sept. 22, 2002, Winton-Salem, The Gallery at Old Salem, "Gunsmiths of Salem and the Vogler Family of Artisans," (888) OLD-SALEM, www.oldsalem.org

Mongoose lemurs are on display at the Museum of Life and Science in Durham through March 2002.

Old Salem Christmas
Through Dec. 31, Winston-Salem, $15/$8, view and participate in Moravian holiday customs, Dec. 15, Salem Christmas celebration, 9:30 a.m.-7p.m., (888) 653-7253, www.oldsalem.org

Knox Inn Christmas
Through Dec. 1, Wadesboro
First United Methodist Church, dinner theater, 6 p.m., $15
(704) 694-4181

Christmas Parade
Dec. 1, Denton
(336) 859-5922

Holiday Memories
Dec. 1-2, Sanford
Center for the Performing Arts
2:30 p.m., family play, $16/$7
(919) 774-4155

Farmers Market Christmas
Dec. 1-2, Kannapolis
9 a.m.-4 p.m., arts, crafts, food, trees, Santa, free
(704) 753-4901

Holiday Home Tour
Dec. 2, Apex
1-5 p.m., $7-$10
(919) 362-8980

Candlelight Tour
Dec. 2, Hillsborough
Historic homes, live music, tree lighting, (919) 732-8156

Disco Biscuits
Dec. 3, Charlotte
Tremont Music Hall, 8 p.m., $15, (704) 522-6500

The Littlest Angel
Dec. 3, Mocksville
Brock Performing Arts Center, 7 p.m., $8/$6, (336) 751-3000

Quilt Show
Dec. 4, Sanford
The Enrichment Center, 10 a.m.- 6 p.m.
(919) 775-7760

A Christmas Carol
Dec. 4-12, Raleigh
Theatre in the Park, $12-$50, (919) 831-6058, www.theatreinthepark.com

photo courtesy of Bill Russ, N.C. Division of Tourism

Get into the holiday spirit at the Candlelight Christmas in Murfreesboro, Dec. 4-5.

Downtown Christmas
Dec. 6, Albemarle
Open house, entertainment, food, reindeer, free, 5:30-9 p.m., (704) 984-9415

Presidents & First Ladies
Dec. 7, Mocksville
Brock Performing Arts Center, $8, 7 p.m., (336) 751-3000

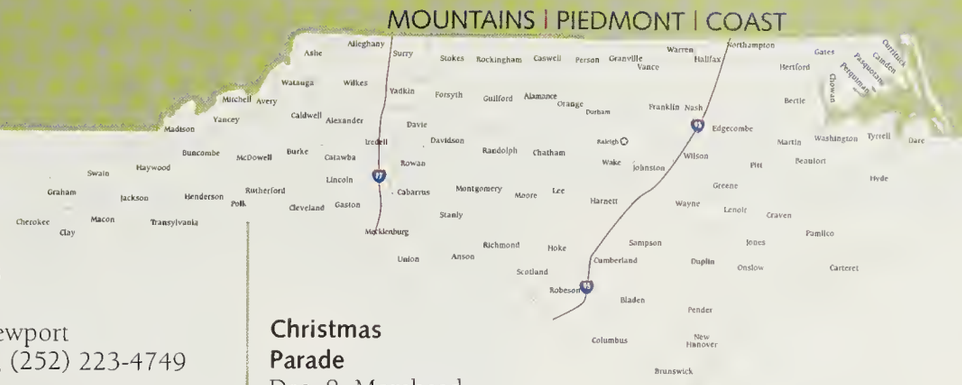
Old Time Square Dance
Dec. 8, Denton
Covered dish dinner at 5:30 p.m., dance 7-10:30 p.m. featuring Oak Tree Boys & Appalachian Mountain Girls, (336) 475-9397

Star Christmas Parade
Dec. 8, Star
2 p.m., (910) 428-9218

Malcolm Blue Farm Christmas Open House
Dec. 9, Aberdeen
12 noon-5 p.m., 1825 farmhouse, carols, food
(910) 944-7558

Blooming Artists' Market
Dec. 8, Lexington
(336) 236-4218

Mercedes Gala
Dec. 10, Hickory
Holiday Inn Select, 6 p.m., benefits Catawba County, $100 admission includes food, entertainment, silent auction & door prizes (one is a Mercedes-Benz), (828) 324-4906



COAST
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1897 Poe House Holiday Tour
Through Jan. 6, Fayetteville
(910) 437-2603

Core Sound Waterfowl Weekend
Through Dec. 2, Harkers Island, Core Sound Waterfowl Museum, (252) 728-1500

Festival of Trees
Through Dec. 2, Greenville
Willis Building, (252) 328-4494 or (800) 376-4494

Cookie Walk & Craft Sale
Dec. 1, New Bern
Christ Episcopal Church
10 a.m.-5 p.m.
(252) 636-0202

Civil War Christmas
Dec. 1, Hamilton
Fort Branch candlelit tour, free
(800) 776-8566

Jaycee Christmas Parade
Dec. 1, Elizabeth City
(252) 482-3400

Christmas in the Country
Dec. 1, Everetts
Arts & crafts, Santa, trees
(252) 792-4131

Island of Lights Holiday Flotilla
Dec. 1, Carolina Beach
Lighted boat parade, free
(910) 458-7116

Core Sound Decoy Festival
Dec. 1-2, Harkers Island
Harkers Island School, show & sale of decoys, loon-calling contest, (252) 726-3164

Swan Days
Dec. 1-2, Swan Quarter
Mattamuskeet Lodge
Nature event with crafts, 10k walk, workshops, food, tours of wildlife refuge, (888) 493-3826, www.albemarle-nc.com/hyde/events/swandays.htm

Christmas Parade
Dec. 2, Newport
2:30 p.m., (252) 223-4749

Christmas Open House
Dec. 2, Windsor
Tour the Hope mansion & King-Bazemore house, admission by donation
(252) 794-3140

Candlelight Christmas
Dec. 4-5, Murfreesboro
4-8:30 p.m., progressive dinner, historic tours, and live music, $25/$7 in advance at
(252) 398-5922
www.murfreesboronc.com

Mid-Atlantic Farm Show
Dec. 4-6, Williamston
Free, (919) 380-0780

Christmas Parade
Dec. 5, Beaufort
4 p.m., (252) 728-1310

Christmas Buffet & Music
Dec. 6, Mount Olive
Lois K. Murphy Regional Center at Mount Olive College, $12, reservations required at
(919) 658-2502

Bethlehem Walk
Dec. 6-8, Arapahoe
Free Will Baptist Church, tours from 7-9 p.m., music
(252) 249-1630

Lighting of World's Largest Living Christmas Tree
Dec. 7-31, Wilmington
Hilton Park, 7 p.m.
(910) 341-7855

Christmas Parade
Dec. 8, Engelhard
11 a.m., free, (252) 925-9911

Swansborough Home Tour
Dec. 8, Swansboro
5 homes, 3 guided tours, $10 donation, (910) 326-4822

Christmas Parade
Dec. 8, Havelock
2 p.m., free, (252) 447-1101

Christmas Parade
Dec. 8, Morehead City, (252) 240-4845

Christmas Parade
Dec. 9, Salter Path
2 p.m., (252) 247-6726

Christmas Parade
Dec. 9, Aurora
3 p.m., (252) 322-4188

Toy Jam Benefit Concert
Dec. 12, Wilmington
Water Street Restaurant
Jazz, folk, bluegrass and rock performers to benefit the Salvation Army. Admission is one new unwrapped toy or monetary donation
(910) 343-1640

Caroling by Carriage
Dec. 14-24, Wilmington
$9/$4, (910) 251-8889

Christmas Parade
Dec. 15, Edenton
11 a.m., free,
(252) 482-3400

12 Days of Christmas
Dec. 15-16, Wilmington
Kenan Auditorium, children's holiday musical, free, (910) 791-1905

Fireworks on the Beach
Dec. 31, Emerald Isle
Bogue Inlet Pier, 9 p.m.,
(252) 354-3315, ext. 249

Island of Lights New Year's Eve Countdown Party
Dec. 31, Carolina Beach
Boardwalk, 10 p.m., live music, dropping beach ball, fireworks, street dance, food, free
(910) 458-7116

LISTING INFORMATION

Deadline for Feb: Dec. 22
Deadline for March: Jan. 25

A phone number must be included with event listings in order to be published. Photos are welcome.

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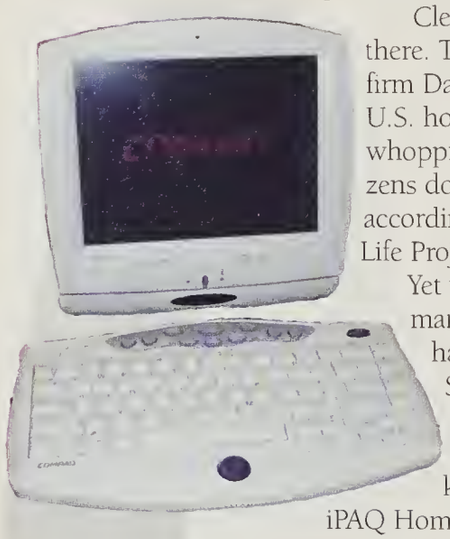
Should you buy an Internet appliance?

Let's say you're not yet online and want to get online, but don't want to mess with a complicated computer. Or let's say your parents or grandparents fit this description. What should you do?

This question has spawned an entire category of simple Internet access devices called Internet appliances. Yet these devices have failed miserably in the marketplace.



Clearly there's a potential market out there. The latest data from market research firm Dataquest shows that 39 percent of U.S. households still aren't online. A whopping 85 percent of U.S. senior citizens don't yet have Internet access, according to the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Yet within the past year, three major manufacturers of Internet appliances have dropped out of the market: Sony, 3Com and Netpliance.

The sole surviving stand-alone Internet appliance actively marketed to consumers is Compaq's iPAQ Home Internet Appliance, which I and my 74-year-old father tested in detail and which, despite great potential, has problems of its own.

Compaq sells two versions that are both attractively priced. The smaller and more portable IA-1 has a flat-panel screen and retails for $399, and the bulkier IA-2 has a conventional computer monitor and retails for $299. Prices at consumer electronics stores, where they're typically sold, are sometimes even less.

Both units operate similarly. They look and act like PCs but lack a hard drive, which is appropriate since Internet appliances aren't meant for storing letters, budgets and so on. Without a hard drive, there's no waiting for the device to "boot up" when you turn it on.

Compaq's Home Internet Appliance is designed for surfing the Web, sending and receiving e-mail, and engaging in instant messaging. It's easy to set up and use.

The biggest negative is that it's inextricably bundled with MSN Companion, Microsoft's operating system for Internet appliances. MSN Companion is tied closely to MSN Internet Access, and like the MSN Internet service provider (ISP), it's slow and buggy. Consumer Reports recently ranked MSN last among eight national ISPs for speed, interruptions and availability.

You don't have to use MSN to connect to the Internet with Compaq's Home Internet Appliance. But because of Compaq's licensing agreement with Microsoft, if you use another ISP, you still have to pay Microsoft $9.95 per month in addition to the fee you pay your new ISP.

On the positive side, if you stay with MSN, your first six months of access is free. After that, though, access costs $21.95 per month.

Some reviewers found the screens of Compaq's Home Internet Appliance too small and the touchpad finicky, but we had no problems with either. More problematic is that the device doesn't support a number of widely-used Internet formats from companies other than Microsoft, such as Adobe Acrobat, RealAudio and QuickTime.

Browsing Internet forums revealed that typically advanced users found the limitations too limiting while beginners appreciated the ease of use. This leads to the core of the Internet appliance quandary for manufacturers.

They've failed thus far at marketing these devices to their logical audience, the "Net laggards," so now they're marketing them to the "Net sophisticates" who want more than one Internet access device in their homes. But this audience will not likely tolerate the devices' technological limitations.

Compaq officially says it's committed to the Internet appliance market, and it seems to recognize the way to improve the device. "In the future we hope to provide access not tied to Microsoft," says Compaq spokesperson David Albritton.

But the larger challenge remains: Persuading Net laggards that paying for Net access is worthwhile. "This audience will wait until they absolutely cannot do without," says Bryan Ma, an analyst from IDC, a market research firm in Framingham, Mass.

Does it make sense to buy the Compaq Home Internet Appliance? Despite the current limitations, maybe. The price is right, and it's suitably simple if you're just getting started.

Another option is MSN TV, formerly called WebTV, a device ranging in price from $99 to $199 that you connect to your TV for Internet access. It's from Microsoft, easy to use, but even more limited. The older WebTV Classic is also available, even less expensive, and still more limited.

For freedom of choice, if you can swing it, it can make sense to spend $600 to $800 on a low-end PC or Mac, which are easier to use than ever.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway. He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or http://members.home.net/reidgold.

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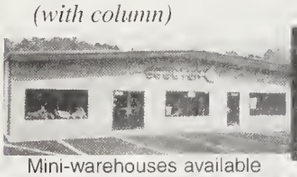

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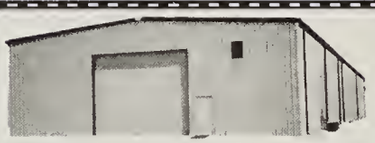

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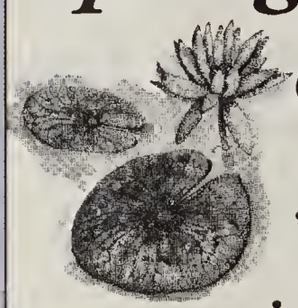

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ANSWERS ARE ON PAGE 33.

MATCH BOXES

Y	I	T	H	S	E	R	C	A	M
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Match the boxes above with the boxes below to find two hidden words in the answer to this multiplication problem.

T	H	M	I	E	I	A	S	Y	H	E	C	S	R

× | S |
|---|
| |

GO FIGURE!

With the 365th day of the year fast approaching, here is a little puzzle that seems appropriate for this month.

Given $Y^2 + E^2 + A^2 = R^2 + S^2 = 365$, can you find the values of Y, E, A, R, and S if the five numbers are consecutive? Go figure.

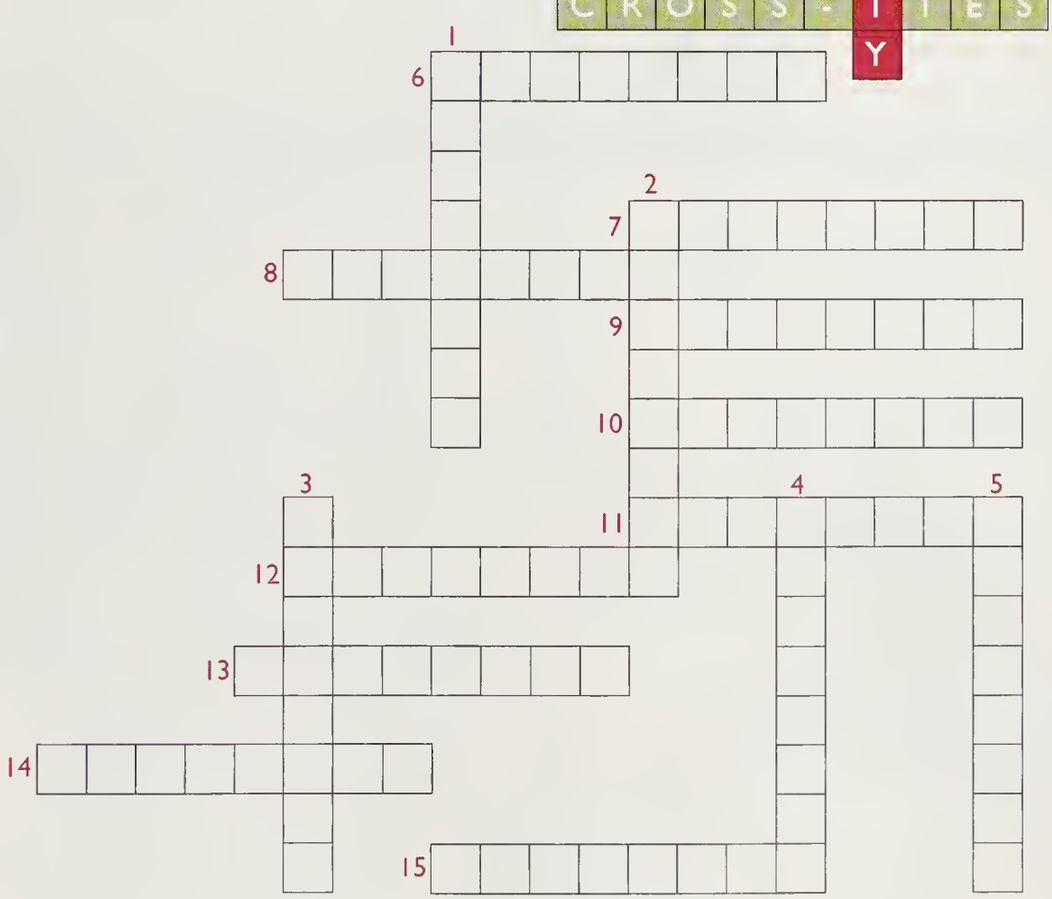
Southern exposure

Food Lines

At a Hendersonville church potluck supper the acting mistress of ceremonies announced that she was gong to ask two questions to determine which tables would lead off the buffet line. Those knowing the answers were to hold up a hand.

There were only two children present; a boy at one table and a girl at another. At the first question, "Name the famous tower in Italy," the boy waved his hand frantically and was called upon to answer. "The leaning tower of pizza," he said confidently. "That's right," he was told. "Your table can go through the line first." "And who can name the famous tower in the Bible?" The little girl stretched her hand in the air as high as she could reach. "The tower of bagel," she exclaimed. Her table went second.

COUNTY CROSS-TIES



ALAMANCE	CABARRUS	CHEROKEE	FRANKLIN	JOHNSTON
BEAUFORT	CALDWELL	COLUMBUS	GUILFORD	MCDOWELL
BUNCOMBE	CARTERET	DAVIDSON	HERTFORD	RICHMOND

Each of North Carolina's 15 eight-letter counties has a piece of its own in this maze. Can you put them in their places? Careful! One mistake will lead to another. The vertical entries are numbered from 1 through 5, and the horizontal entries are numbered from 6 through 15.

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Ham-Stuffed Apples

(From Lynne Tolley, proprietress of Miss Mary Bobo's Boarding House Restaurant in Lynchburg, Tennessee.)

1 cup Country Ham, finely chopped
1/3 cup raisins
1 tablespoon Jack Daniel's Whiskey
3 tablespoons butter, softened
1/4 cup pecans, chopped
3 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
4 large baking apples, unpeeled & cored
1/4 cup cider vinegar

Soak raisins in J.D. Whiskey, stirring often, for 30 minutes. Combine ham, butter, raisins & whiskey, pecans & brown sugar. Place apples in a greased baking dish; sprinkle lemon juice inside each. Divide the filling equally among apples, stuffing into cavities. Bake 40-45 minutes in a 350-degree oven, basting outsides of apples with vinegar.

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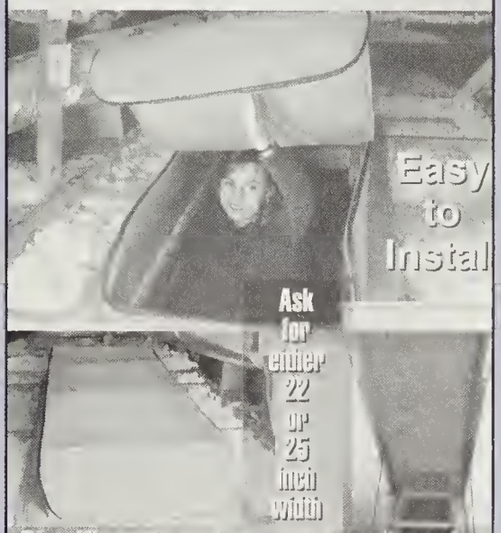

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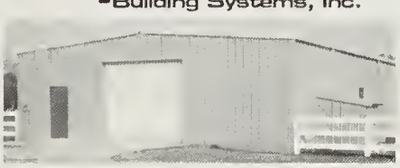

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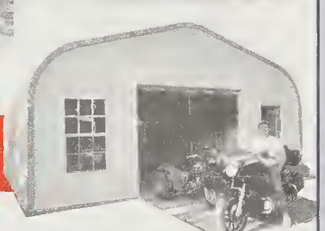

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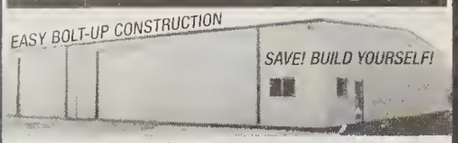

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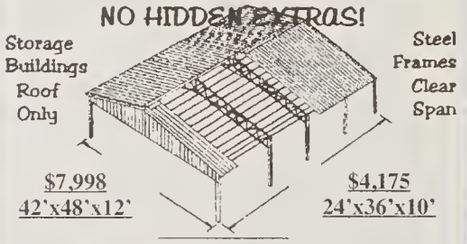

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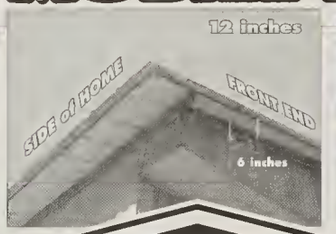

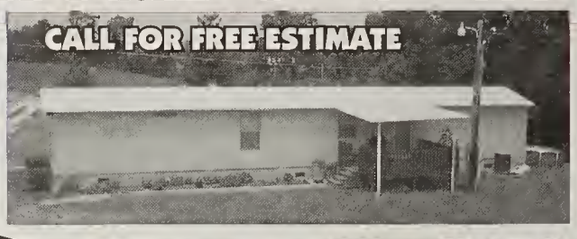

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Geothermal heat pumps are most efficient systems today

By James Dulley

A ground-loop system can be installed horizontally or vertically.

Throughout its life, installing a geothermal heat pump usually makes economic sense for the average home, but always have your contractor do a computerized payback analysis for you. If your house is extremely energy efficient and already has low utility bills, even cutting them in half with a geothermal heat pump may not justify its higher cost.

A geothermal heat pump both heats and cools your home like a common air-type heat pump, but that is where the similarities end. In the heating mode, a geothermal heat pump pulls free heat from a ground loop, well water, lake water, etc. for superhigh efficiencies. For example, with a coefficient of performance (COP) of 4, it produces an extra $3-worth of free heat for each $1 on your utility bills. Also, in the heating mode, the heat blowing out of the registers is often warmer than with a standard air-to-air heat pump so comfort during the winter is better.

During the summer, the energy savings can be as much as 60 percent. Some geothermal models have efficiencies as high as a seasonal energy efficiency rating (SEER) of 22, as compared to an old central air conditioner at about 8. The dehumidification factor is also often better for improved indoor air quality, less allergic problems and better comfort.

When operating in the air-conditioning mode, most geothermal heat pumps offer the option of using a desuperheater device. This device takes the waste heat from your house that is normally exhausted outdoors and diverts it to your water heater for free hot water during the summer.

Geothermal heat pumps are so energy efficient because they use the earth as the source of heat during the winter; and during the summer, they exhaust indoor heat to the earth. Since the ground temperature several feet below the surface stays relatively constant year-round, a geothermal heat pump uses less electricity to heat and cool your house. Using constant-temperature water from a deep well also provides the same efficiency benefits.

During the winter, even though it feels cold outdoors when it is 30 degrees, there is still heat energy in the air that a standard heat pump can "pump" into your house. At the same time, the ground temperature may be 55 degrees. The colder it gets outdoors, the greater the benefit of a geothermal heat pump becomes.

The efficiency and comfort improvement when cooling during the summer with a geothermal heat pump can be even more dramatic. If you plan to use water, in particular well water, with your geothermal heat pump, consider a model with an additional water-type heat exchanger. Often, the incoming water is often cold enough to cool your house without having to run the compressor.

To install a typical ground-loop system, a series of small pipes is placed in deep narrow trenches dug in your yard with a back hoe. Drilling deep vertical holes can be used instead. The pipes are connected to a heat exchanger inside the heat pump. An antifreeze solution runs through the pipes to capture heat during the winter or exhaust heat during the summer.

Another efficient design (called DX) does not use an antifreeze solution in pipes or a heat exchanger. Instead, thin copper tubing is placed in the ground and the actual refrigerant (freon or R410A) runs directly through it. This requires less overall ground loop length and is ideal for smaller yards. The inefficiencies of using an extra heat exchanger are also eliminated.

Since a noisy outdoor condenser fan is not needed, most geothermal units are located entirely inside your house. There are designs to fit utility rooms, basements or attics. This makes servicing them easier. If you have a gas or oil furnace that still works, new outdoor geothermal heat pump units are also available so you can still use the existing furnace.

Write for (instantly download - www.dulley.com) Utility Bills Update No. 644 - buyer's guide of 13 single/two-stage geothermal heat pump manufacturers listing efficiencies, heat/cool outputs, features, fuel cost comparison chart and ground loop details. Please include $3.00 and a business-size SASE. James Dulley, Carolina Country, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244

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by Hank Smith

Don't let winter's cold hinder the joys of outdoor gardening activities and indoor plant culture. With the arrival of plant and seed catalogs, make plans for next spring's vegetable and flower gardens. Prepare a simple sketch of garden areas. Then decide on the trees, shrubs and garden seeds needed to complete the landscaping. Large properties sometimes feature a background planting area adaptable to adding a row of Christmas trees. Start a holiday tradition by choosing an indoor balled-and-burlapped tree and then plant it. The row of trees also functions as a windbreak at the edge of the yard.

Feed houseplants

Even when properly fertilized and watered, indoor plants can starve for food. All plants require light to manufacture food from fertilizer. Light — rather than fertilizer — is the limiting factor for most plants. During winter months, help plants make the most of the little light they receive by keeping leaves clean. Wash leaves with water, except for fuzzy-leaved plants such as African violets. Instead, brush those plants with a small artist's brush. In addition, garden centers often sell special lamps to use with houseplants.

Holiday flowers

Poinsettias do best in a draft-free spot. They like bright light, but will fade if placed in direct sun. Keep soil moist but not soggy. Christmas cactus is often confused with Thanksgiving cactus. A true Christmas bloomer is *Schlumbergera Bridgesii* which has rounder edges than other cacti. Water well; then allow soil to become moderately dry before watering again. Changes in light level will cause flower bud drop. Don't shift plant to various locations. Like poinsettias, cacti suffer in drafts. If room temperature is warmer than 70 degrees F, it's doubtful that flowers will develop. Amaryllis grow from softball-sized bulbs. Smaller, less-expensive bulbs are available, but they require several years to produce large blooms. Plant amaryllis bulbs in a standard soil mix in a container two inches wider than the bulb. Set bulb one-half to two-thirds beneath soil level. Water, then set pot in warm spot. When green sprouts appear at the bulb's center, begin watering again. As flowers begin opening, keep plant out of direct sun to prevent color from fading. These flowers produce a large range of color: scarlet, salmon, pink, picotee and white — as well as stripes. Amaryllis flower stalks can stand two feet tall. Their height makes balance important. They need to be grown in clay or ceramic pots with good drainage. Lightweight pots can topple over and damage blooms. Sometimes bloom spikes need to be tied to stakes.

Liming

If soil tests indicate that lime is needed in the vegetable garden or on the lawn, it should be applied well ahead of the spring growing season. Spread recommended amount evenly over soil surface. Apply on a calm day and rake gently into soil. If establishing cool-season lawn grass as fescue and/or bluegrass, do so before severe cold weather.

Spider mites might attack

Winter house heat can nourish the population of plant pests such as spider mites. These insects thrive in hot, dry environments. Misting with cold water can ward off these pests. Thorough dusting with fine sulphur or spraying with a miticide also provides effective control. These mites usually feed under the surfaces of leaves, puncturing tissues and sucking juices. The foliage has an unhealthy, white, glazed appearance. Foliage frequently drops prematurely. The eggs are laid on the underside of leaves, usually attached to a web.

Lawn weeds

A broadleaf weed killer will control these weeds in the lawn. Before applying, be sure to rake fallen leaves from the grass. Place these in the compost pile to decay over winter. Before applying weed killer, make certain to check the label.

Forcing daffodils and tulips

For indoor cheer during dreary winter days, daffodil and tulip bulbs can be forced into bloom for indoor cheer. Use good potting soil. Place three to five bulbs per pot, depending upon size of bulbs. Bury pots in trench dug in outdoor garden area. Leave tops of pots six to eight inches below soil line. Pile dead leaves on top of pots. Fill trench with soil. If rodents are a problem, place a frame of wire mesh or window screen over pots before filling the trench with soil. Leave pots in place for six weeks. Then bring pots indoors and place in a sunny window or under strong artificial light. Apply very little water. When flower stalks appear, fertilize with a complete liquid fertilizer.

Deckin' the halls

Wreaths, garlands, swags and Christmas trees herald signs of the season. Branches of holly, cedar and juniper contribute their own smells of holiday. Mistletoe with poisonous berries and glycerine-treated greenery should be displayed where it cannot be reached by children or pets. Place the indoor tree away from the dry air of an A/C vent, or close the vent. Accent outside displays with an espalier pyracantha, trained against a blank wall. The Swedish Christmas tree extends joys of the season throughout the year. Such espaliers are trained on metal bars — similar to those used in building construction. Metal bars are secured to the wall with lead-headed mortar nails. The soft lead, attached to the head of the nail, is bent over a branch to guide it in the design.

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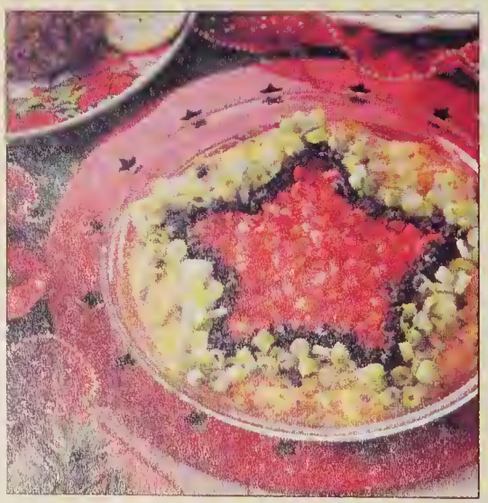
Glowing campfire coals are not needed to enjoy the traditional taste of s'mores with this recipe.

8 to 10 whole graham crackers (about 5 inches x 2 ½ inches)
1 package fudge brownie mix (13-inch x 9-inch pan size)
2 cups miniature marshmallows
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
⅔ cup chopped peanuts

Arrange graham crackers in a single layer in a greased 13 inch x 9 inch x 2 inch baking pan. Prepare the brownie batter according to package directions. Spread over crackers. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 – 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Sprinkle with marshmallows, chocolate chips and peanuts. Bake 5 minutes longer or until marshmallows are slightly puffed and golden brown. Cool on wire rack before cutting. Yield: 2 dozen.

SOUTHWESTERN STAR DIP

2 cups (8 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1 cup mayonnaise*
1 can (4 ½ ounces) chopped ripe olives, drained, divided
1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chiles, undrained
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
⅛ teaspoon hot pepper sauce
1 medium tomato, chopped
¼ cup chopped green onions
Tortilla chips



In a bowl, combine cheese, mayonnaise, ⅓ cup olives, chilies, garlic powder and hot pepper sauce. Transfer to an ungreased 9 inch pie plate. Bake uncovered, at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until hot and bubbly. Sprinkle tomato on top in the shape of a star; outline with remaining olives. Sprinkle onions around the star. Yield: 2 ⅔ cups.

*Light or fat free mayonnaise may not be substituted for regular mayonnaise.

CARMEL FILLED CHOCOLATE COOKIES

1 cup butter (no substitutes), softened
1 cup plus 1 tablespoon sugar, divided
1 cup packed brown sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup baking cocoa
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 ¼ cups chopped pecans, divided
1 package (13 ounces) Rolo candies
4 squares (1 ounce each) white baking chocolate, melted

In a mixing bowl, cream butter, 1 cup sugar and brown sugar. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa and baking soda; gradually add to the creamed mixture, beating just until combined. Stir in ½ cup pecans.

Shape a tablespoonful of dough around each candy, forming a ball. In a small bowl, combine the remaining sugar and pecans; dip each cookie halfway. Place nut side up 2 inches apart on greased baking sheets.

Bake at 375 degrees for 7-10 minutes or until tops are slightly cracked. Cool for 3 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely. Drizzle with melted white chocolate. Yield: about 5 dozen.

Recipes are by Taste of Home magazine. For a sample copy, send $2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, PO Box 990, Greendale WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web page at www.tasteofhome.com.

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